



## BEST PRACTICES FOR CONDUCTING IN-PERSON EXEMPLIFICATIONS

Conducting degrees and initiating men into the Order is not new for any of us. It is one of the most gratifying things we do as leaders in the Knights of Columbus. And while COVID-19 has introduced some new variables into the equation, many time-honored best practices have not changed:

- The venue must be set-up appropriately.
- All necessary materials (Rosaries, Lapel pins, baldrics, rope, string, etc.) should be secured and on-hand at each exemplification site.
- Degree teams should be well-rehearsed.
- The exemplification(s) should be well-publicized.

In light of COVID-19 and the restrictions many jurisdictions have in place to keep people safe, there are some new “Best Practices” that should guide your planning process. If you follow these guidelines – and make prudent decisions to keep your members and prospects safe – **it is possible to conduct in-person exemplifications while following all COVID-19 guidelines.**

For additional guidance please reach out to your Regional Growth Director, Tom Hamling, Director of Ceremonials ([ceremonials@kofc.org](mailto:ceremonials@kofc.org)) or Bob Ennis, Director of Membership Growth ([Robert.ennis@kofc.org](mailto:Robert.ennis@kofc.org)).

### KNOW THE LOCAL COVID RULES...AND FOLLOW THEM

- When conducting a meeting, exemplification or any other in-person event, all state and local social distancing and other COVID-19 guidelines must be followed. Know what those guidelines are.
  - What is the maximum number of people for an indoor and for an outdoor gathering?
  - Are masks required for everyone? Even if they're not...be safe. Wear a mask.
  - How does your area define 'social distancing?' How far apart must people be spaced? Is it the same for an indoor event as for an outdoor event?
- Now more than ever, it is important to give men the opportunity to join the Knights of Columbus, but not at the expense of anyone's health. The safety and well-being of your members, prospects and families should be your highest priority.

### CHOOSE YOUR VENUE(S) WISELY

- Is the location centrally located and easily accessible?
- Is there ample parking?
- Is the venue well-ventilated?
- Is there a reliable Wi-Fi connection? (More about that later.)
- Is there sufficient space to allow all attendees to appropriately socially distance?

## **SELECT THE RIGHT PERSON TO SPEARHEAD EACH EXEMPLIFICATION**

- Hosting live events during COVID-19 is new territory. Each local team leader needs to have the can-do attitude necessary to work through the challenges.
- He must be able to develop and lead a team...not try to handle every detail himself.

## **PUBLICIZE THE EXEMPLIFICATION(S)**

- Make sure every district deputy and every council are aware of the date and time of each exemplification.
- Advance planning is key...communicate regularly with everyone who will play a role in the exemplification(s)...make sure everyone is engaged in making the ceremony a success.
- Utilize the state council web site, local council sites, parish & diocesan web sites, etc.
- Be present on social media. Post information on the exemplification(s), then like, share, re-post, etc., to maximize the number of prospects who see your message.
- Encourage councils to call prospects whom their council has identified.
- Partner with priests and bishops. They are among our best recruiters...and can be our best promoters as well.
- Focus outreach on newer councils and those who have had minimal experience with the Exemplification of Charity, Unity & Fraternity.

## **ESTABLISH A SYSTEM WHERE CANDIDATES CAN REGISTER IN ADVANCE FOR THE EXEMPLIFICATION**

- This will allow you to plan and make sure no location has more attendees than can be safely accommodated.
- That said, it is always a good idea to be prepared for “walk-ins” on the day of the event.

## **IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT NEW MEMBERS**

- These exemplifications give First Degree members the opportunity to advance to full Knighthood and give online members a means to transfer to council-based membership.

## **INCLUDE A VIRTUAL OPTION**

- This goes back to the earlier note about reliable Wi-Fi.
- Live stream every exemplification conducted in your jurisdiction.
  - This will allow the friends and families of the candidates and others to view the ceremony while keeping the in-person attendance within local guidelines.
  - Some candidates will be uncomfortable in a group of any size.

## **BE ACCOMMODATING TO THOSE WHO MAY NOT SPEAK ENGLISH**

- Make exemplifications bi-lingual where appropriate
- Host Spanish or French exemplifications in areas where English is not the primary language spoken.

## **START THE DAY WITH MASS**

- There is no better way to get candidates and others into the proper frame of mind, and to reinforce the spiritual benefits of membership in the Knights of Columbus.

## **SCHEDULE ONE OR MORE FOURTH DEGREES SOON AFTER THE EXEMPLIFICATION**

- After this moving and engaging ceremony, men will be highly motivated to advance to the Fourth Degree.